

What's your name?

Georgina Byrne *reflects on* Isaiah 43:1-7 and Luke 3:15-17, 21-22

So much of who we are, how we present ourselves to the world, is wrapped up in our name. Our name might represent our nationality, our background; it might give away our likely age, or the aspirations of our parents. Some people spend their lives having to spell or explain their name. We grow into our names; some of us change them.

Isaiah 43 reminds us that our name has something to do with our relationship with God. God, the creator, we recall, names things in the beginning of Genesis and they come into being. When Isaiah tells us that God calls us by name, it signifies that God calls us into being and gives us our purpose. God knows who, what and how we truly are. We are God's.

In Luke's version of the baptism of Jesus, God names Jesus "my Son", and in so doing imbues Jesus' life with a meaning beyond imagining. Jesus is named as God's son, by God, and his whole life's purpose is made known.

Christians often recall their own baptism on this day. The Prayer Book catechism reminds us that our baptism makes us "a member of Christ, the child of God and an inheritor of the kingdom of heaven". Whatever our moniker, God has called us into being for a purpose. We are named, called, and known by God. 🍷



O God, you call me into being and know me by name; walk with me through the journey of life. Protect me when storms rage and fires burn and hold me precious in your sight. For I am your child. Amen.

Week of Prayer for Christian Unity

18-25 January

by Lisa Tulfer

The Week of Prayer for Christian Unity starts on Friday, with the aim of being united, as Jesus prays "so that the world may believe". The World Council of Churches

organises this event, which has its roots in the early twentieth century, and each year the resources are provided by churches from a different part of the world. It traditionally takes place between 18 and 25 January, although in the southern hemisphere, where this falls during the summer holidays, it is often kept around Pentecost.

In the UK, this week is coordinated by Churches Together in Britain and Ireland, and many churches take the opportunity to hold joint events, serving both to strengthen Christian fellowship and also to witness, united, to the love of God.

You can find out more at <https://ctbi.org.uk>, or by following the Twitter hashtag #wpcu2019 🍷

A new year in West Virginia

by Helen van Koevering

Our kitchen window has a wonderful view of an old oak tree where we hang a bird feeder. The squirrels use all their inquisitive ingenuity to get at those nuts and seeds. Raking leaves in the fall, I discovered hidden acorns, and right now a lone squirrel is searching the frozen lawn for remembered treasures. The frigid temperatures this Christmas

have only slightly reduced the squirrels' activity, and I'm aware too of the chickadee's call and the bright red cardinal on the bare branches. Besides the oak, the evergreen ivy and fir tree add depth to the new layer of snow, while other trees' bare branches reach upwards. And there, walking calmly past the other window, is a deer. A family of deer live in this neighbourhood, and their appearance is always a surprising delight, even to my grown children. These scenes are creating new memories for our family, reminding us of the God who remains with us in the newness. 🍷

“Be faithful in small things because it is in them that your strength lies.

St Teresa of Calcutta, missionary and humanitarian

Church of Scotland: Orphir and Stenness Parish

Interim Moderator: Rev June Freeth 721449

Locum Minister Rev Martin Prentice 851139

Session Clerk: Nicol 811242

Kirk Information

There is a loop system. Adjust hearing aids to benefit. Switch off phones. They cause interference with the organ. Thank you
A warm invitation is extended to everyone to meet in the hall at the back of the church, after the service, for a cup of tea or coffee.

Intimations

Thursday 10am – 12noon: Community Café in the kirk hall

The session is seeking nominations for new elders. Nomination forms are available in the Kirk hall. Up to four names can be proposed on a form.

A box to collect forms will be available in the Kirk hall on Sunday 20th & 27th Jan and 3rd Feb.

The session will then meet to progress this matter.

Readings:

Isaiah 43: 1-7

Acts 8: 14-17

Luke 3: 15-17 and 21-22

Hymns:

201 Worship the Lord in the Beauty of Holiness

303 It came upon the midnight clear

336 Christ is our light

557 O Love that wilt not let me go

459 Crown him with many crowns

Doxology

May God's blessing surround you each day,

As you trust Him and walk in his way,

May his presence within guard and keep you from sin,

Go in peace, go in joy, go in love.